

1 the record and you should be as responsive as possible. Any
2 questions concerning --

3 A. No.

4 Q. -- what I just said?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Will you state your full name for the record,
7 please.

8 A. Michael E. Dolecki.

9 Q. Your current position?

10 A. Superintendent of schools of Crawford Central
11 School District.

12 Q. And how long have you been in that position,
13 Mr. Dolecki?

14 A. A little over four years.

15 Q. And will you just state for the record your
16 professional background. If you can start with your
17 academic career, undergraduate, whatever is current, that
18 would be helpful.

19 A. Well, I started as a teacher in St. Mary's,
20 Pennsylvania in 1975; I was there for four years. Went then
21 to Clarion Area High School, I was a teacher there for seven
22 years, health and physical education teacher at both places.
23 From there I went to Franklin Area High School where I was
24 the assistant principal for five years. Then I went to
25 Union School District as an elementary school principal for



1 Q. You don't remember having heard that?

2 A. I heard it sitting here.

3 Q. I mean during that particular --

4 A. No, I do not.

5 Q. -- meeting?

6 A. No, I do not.

7 Q. You didn't hear anything like that?

8 A. No, I did not. Don't recall it.

9 Q. Okay. Moving forward. Again, I go back to this
10 term you are the chief executive officer --

11 A. I remember you telling me that a couple times.

12 Q. I don't have to tell you, you know that.

13 A. I'm hoping I do. I appreciate the support you
14 have here for me.

15 Q. Now, being chief executive officer of the school
16 district let me ask you straight up and down: Is there a
17 need for minority of one professional staff in this school
18 district, working in the school district, and if so, and I'm
19 including teachers; is there a need?

20 A. There has always been concern for hiring
21 minorities in our school district. I have --

22 Q. Go ahead.

23 A. I have expressed that in our recruiting efforts,
24 the need.

25 Q. Speaking of your recruiting efforts. What have

1 you done in that area? What tangible steps have you taken
2 in regards to recruiting efforts?

3 A. Couple things. When I was the assistant
4 superintendent, we always attempted to look at minorities.
5 And knowing that -- even to a point initially that I wanted
6 to advertise for minorities to apply for positions. At that
7 time I was informed by our then solicitor that I could not
8 do that because it would be -- in his opinion it would be
9 reverse discrimination.

10 Q. To advertise?

11 A. That's correct. So that was my thought process.
12 So we went to recruiting fairs when I was there at the table
13 I would ask minorities to come over and talk to me. Also,
14 that if we had -- if there was an opportunity to hire a
15 minority, I would look very closely at that individual.

16 Q. You attended these recruitment fairs?

17 A. Yeah, when I was the assistant I did, that was
18 before 2001 now, 2001 and before.

19 Q. Lee McFerren employed at the district at that
20 time?

21 A. No, he wasn't.

22 Q. He wasn't?

23 A. No.

24 Q. Did he have --

25 A. Wait, wait, let me go back. Lee was employed in

1 in the district for a while too.

2 Q. Now, on the efforts of diversity, does the school
3 district support or sponsor any kind of employee education
4 training program, community out reach program?

5 A. We do not.

6 Q. You don't?

7 A. No, we do not. You mean on our own a program that
8 says that -- give me an example.

9 Q. Out reach community, one, as a part of the
10 recruitment effort to get to know the larger community,
11 minority community. Any efforts on the part of the school
12 district to sponsor such a program?

13 A. Can you give me an example of the program? I'm
14 not quite understanding your question.

15 Q. Some institutions sponsor open house, you know,
16 and invite the community at large with some emphasis on
17 minority community, you know.

18 A. If you're referring to that, no, we don't do that.

19 Q. Anything like that?

20 A. No. We are not involved in any program that I'm
21 aware of.

22 Q. I noticed from your job description you also have
23 responsibilities for budgeting; is that right?

24 A. Um-hmm.

25 Q. That's your primary responsibility, budgets?

1 Q. As I understand it, again, basic policy, help me
2 crystallize this. Permanent full-time teachers are
3 recommended by the administration, the board gives its
4 blessing, that is hire, disapproval or approval, right?

5 A. (Witness moved head up and down.) If I can
6 rephrase again, permanent teachers are recommended by the
7 administration. They are then given to the board at a board
8 meeting and then they approve them, yes.

9 Q. Long-term substitutes are also recommended by the
10 administration to the board and the board -- for the board's
11 approval?

12 A. That's correct.

13 Q. Substitutes are -- there is a list of substitutes
14 that must be approved by the board, right?

15 A. Substitutes -- for any employee to be paid in this
16 school district they must be approved by the school board.

17 Q. And the responsibility for assigning substitutes
18 lies with the administration; is that correct?

19 A. Assigning substitutes?

20 Q. Right.

21 A. No, that's the sub service that assigns.

22 Q. Yes, but that's outsource, you outsourced them,
23 right? That function you contract out, you outsource.

24 A. I thought your question was the assigning --

25 Q. Right.

1 Miss Baker in terms of relationship, blood relationship.

2 A. You asked the question, she's a sister of
3 Don Wigton.

4 Q. Right, Don Wigton. When Mr. Wigton -- when Don
5 Wigton, Jr. became principal, did he also comply with the
6 nepotism policy?

7 A. I don't know if he did, we do, the district did,
8 yes.

9 Q. That's documented, I mean as a fact?

10 A. Yeah. I can get the information or the witnesses
11 that were there when the board member was there, yes.

12 Q. If you can provide that.

13 A. I can provide that for you.

14 Q. One other thing, the practice by which long-term
15 substitute positions are filled, and you have been with the
16 school district since -- when did you come?

17 A. November of '94.

18 Q. Now, based upon your experience long-term
19 substitutes those who have filled positions, long-term
20 substitutes have not always been subjected to an interview
21 process; is that correct?

22 A. Not always.

23 Q. What has been the practice, I mean, based upon
24 your experience, you say you were assistant superintendent
25 before you became --

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. -- superintendent? What has been your practice
3 regarding the requirement that candidates or applicants for
4 long-term substitutes undergo an interview?

5 A. It's a culmination of a lot of things. Sometimes
6 if you have a person that's been a long-term substitute for
7 two years -- for a year, and maybe has had one semester off,
8 and we have another maternity leave, we might place that
9 person in because they did a good job for us before. Do we
10 need to go through an interview process with them again? My
11 feeling is no, they've shown they can do a good job, we just
12 didn't have a job available.

13 In some situations we have had people for
14 long-term vacancy open, we have interviewed because we
15 didn't feel at that time we could place somebody in there.
16 We didn't feel that we needed to interview and see who was
17 out there that we could recommend for that position. You
18 can't say there's one way of doing things, there's different
19 ways of doing it based on that situation.

20 Q. So it's been ad hoc, not a formal practice?

21 A. I know some of the terms you use, ad hoc and the
22 other one, I don't know if I could agree with the term. I
23 would more say as an educational way I would think that's
24 our way, a prudent way, of hiring people in those
25 situations.

1 Q. Well, as best you can, since 1994 when you came
2 here up to the present, how would you describe it over
3 policy -- as the practice, I should say, not the policy.

4 A. I just described it.

5 Q. Well, if you'd be kind enough to favor us again
6 with it. As to what the policy has been applied as a
7 practice.

8 A. It's not a policy, it's a practice. The practice
9 I just described to you. There is different ways of filling
10 long-term positions and I just mentioned that to you.

11 Q. Do you know of any instance in which a teacher who
12 is contemplating taking sabbatical leave, taking leave for
13 whatever reason, medical or otherwise, and asks that she be
14 replaced during her absence with a substitute, do you know
15 of any instance where the substitute has commenced a
16 replacement of that teacher and then abruptly dismissed in
17 the mid-semester; do you know of any instance where that has
18 taken place?

19 A. I know of a situation where a teacher recommended
20 somebody for a medical absence and, again, I think
21 Mr. Heller testified to that and so did I, that the teachers
22 do not hire.

23 Q. I understand that. I am not challenging that.
24 I'm not challenging the authority of the administration and
25 board to hire, that's not an issue. I've never challenged

1 that. What I am inquiring about is the method by which, and
2 the practice, whether the practices are followed, how the
3 practice has been applied, you know, followed, you know, in
4 terms of filling long-term substitute positions. That's
5 what I'm --

6 A. Yeah, but I just answered your question how we did
7 that.

8 Q. Then I asked you a follow-up question. I asked,
9 do you know of any instances during your tenure with the
10 school district either as assistant superintendent or as
11 superintendent where you had a teacher who takes leave,
12 before she takes leave she writes the assistant
13 superintendent, look, I want this substitute to replace me
14 during my absence. The substitute comes aboard and starts
15 to work, and then two weeks later or so is abruptly
16 dismissed from the position, no longer allowed to continue
17 to substitute for that teacher. Do you know any instance
18 where that has been happened apart from Mrs. Wagner?

19 A. No.

20 Q. You don't know any others. You have been here
21 since 1994 and you can't point to any instances where it
22 occurred other than what happened to Mrs. Wagner, can you?
23 Honestly, you can't do that, can you?

24 A. You're answering the questions for me. Can I
25 answer my own questions?